



TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE GEORGE P. BUSH, COMMISSIONER

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PRESS RELEASE

Texas State Veterans Cemeteries Awarded \$1.19 Million by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Texas VLB awarded more than \$1 million to expand and improve cemeteries for veterans

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Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairman George P. Bush is proud to announce that the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) awarded the VLB two grants totaling \$1,193,134 for the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries in Abilene and Killeen.

"One of the great privileges of serving as Texas Land Commissioner is overseeing one of our state's veterans programs," Commissioner Bush said. "The work the Veterans Land Board quietly does every day is important to all Texans: taking care of our veterans and their families through every stage of life. These funds provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs will go a long way to help the VLB honor our veterans who chose their final resting place to be at one of our VLB cemeteries in Abilene and Killeen."

The first grant is for \$393,485, which will fund 100 percent of allowable costs associated with the improvement of the Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Abilene. The grant will cover the construction of 6,700 linear feet of perimeter and security fencing, as well as supporting infrastructure. The project will develop approximately two additional acres of cemetery lands and provide continued service for 27,520 veterans and their eligible family members. The Abilene cemetery includes a covered, open-air structure for committal services, visitors' center, computer kiosk for locating specific graves or interments, assembly area for special occasions, avenue of flags and memorial walkway for future monuments.

The second grant, for \$799,649, will fund 100 percent of allowable costs associated with the second expansion of the Central Texas State Veterans Cemetery in Killeen. The grant will cover the construction of a memorial walk and wall, screen walls, scattering garden, landscaping, irrigation and supporting infrastructure. The entire project will develop approximately one acre.

The cemetery in Killeen is located on 174 acres that were previously a part of Fort Hood and donated to the State of Texas by the federal government. The construction of the

cemetery was made possible through a coordination of area Veterans groups, the city of Killeen, the federal government, and the VLB.

Initially, the cemetery provided 7,620 gravesites on 31 acres. The first expansion project, completed in May 2015, was a \$5 million year-long renovation effort that added 4,000 new burial crypts, installed concrete support sleeves for headstones, replaced capstones on the columbaria, and added new turf and landscape features including bushes and trees.

"We are excited about these grant awards, which will support our efforts of maintaining these hallowed grounds in a manner that sends a clear message of gratitude to our Texas Veterans and their families," said Eric Brown, Deputy Director of the Texas State Veterans Cemeteries.

The VLB manages four Texas State Veterans Cemeteries exclusively for Veterans, their spouses and dependent children. The cemeteries are located in Abilene, Corpus Christi, Killeen and Mission. They were constructed through a partnership between the State of Texas and the VA, and complement the four national cemeteries in San Antonio, Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth and El Paso.

These cemeteries are special resting places, where friends, family and fellow Texans can honor Texas Veterans. The sacrifices they laid upon the altar of freedom will never be diminished nor forgotten. Burial benefits at Texas State Veterans Cemeteries are identical to those at Federal VA cemeteries.

Texas State Veterans Cemetery Abilene	Texas State Veterans Cemetery Killeen
7457 West Lake Road	11463 SH 195
Abilene, Texas 79601	Killeen, Texas 76542
325-673-4446	254-616-1770

Burials: 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday - Friday

Visitation: 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. everyday

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